



**Have a Heart...**

**Give a Child a New Start**

## Home Study Helps Prepare You to Foster or Adopt

The home study that CFSA conducts is an important part of the approval process for foster and adoptive parents. It provides us with information and assurances about your residence, parenting style, and attitudes while allowing you to assess the potential impact of foster or adopting on your life. You will meet with a CFSA staff member several times to answer questions and provide required documentation. The person conducting your study will visit your home. The entire home study process usually spans several weeks.

During your home study, CFSA will interview you and your family members about your:

- Educational background, work history, religious affiliation, personal interests and hobbies, and child-raising experience.
- Motivation for fostering or adopting.
- Feelings about your own childhood and parents including any history of abuse and/or neglect.
- Opinions about discipline.
- Attitudes toward abused and neglected children and their birth families.
- Attitudes toward different socioeconomic, ethnic, and cultural groups and your ability to help children from a different background maintain their ethnic identity.
- Feelings about a foster or adoptive child maintaining relationships with his/her siblings.
- Expectations of children in foster care.
- Ability to work with specific behaviors and issues.

During the home study, CFSA will also ask you to provide documentation such as:

- Police and FBI clearances for all adults 18 and older living in your home.
- Medical reports for everyone living in your home.
- School adjustment reports for children currently living in your home.
- Documentation of marital status (if applicable).
- Financial information.
- Three references.
- Proof of employment (if applicable).
- Lead paint inspection results.
- Emergency evacuation plan for your home.

Does this home study process seem demanding and invasive? Child protection is our primary job, and we must be careful and cautious in ensuring homes for children are safe. For your part, you will want to think deeply about what fostering or adopting entails. The home study process helps you to consider all the issues and gives you the time to thoroughly think through your choice. ■

*The central struggle of parenthood is to let our hopes for our children outweigh our fears.*

Ellen Goodwin, Columnist